

## REBEL CRUELITIES TO PRISONERS.

## The Horrors of Andersonville, of Libby Prison, and of Belle Isle.

## Plundering, Starving, Freezing and Shooting.

## Testimony of Privates, Officers and Surgeons.

## Report of the Sanitary Commission.

The Sanitary Commission has published a "Narrative of Privations and Sufferings of United States Officers and Soldiers while Prisoners of War in the Hands of the Rebel Authorities, being the Report of a Commission of Inquiry appointed by the United States Sanitary Commission, with an Appendix containing the Testimony." The Commission was composed of the following members: VALENTINE MOTT, M.D., LL.D.; EDWARD DELAFIELD, M.D., President of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New-York; GOUVERNEUR MORRIS WILKINS, M.D.; EDWARD H. WALKER, M.D., Professor in the Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia; Hon. J. T. CLARK HARE, Judge of the District Court of the City and County of Philadelphia; and the Rev. THOMAS WALKER, Rector of St. Clement's Church, Philadelphia.

The report of this Commission with the testimony make an 8vo. volume of 282 pages. The evidence was taken under oath. We make such selections from it as we have space for, and we take first the following statement as to the Andersonville prison in Georgia.

The following is the deposition of Private Tracy, Co. G, 63d New-York Volunteers:

I am a private in the 63d New-York Regiment of Volunteers, Company G. We were captured with about eight hundred Federal troops, in front of Petersburg, on the 23d of June, 1864. We were kept at Petersburg two days, at Richmond, Belle Isle, three days, then conveyed by rail to Lynchburg. Marched seventy-five miles to Danville, thence by rail to Andersonville, Georgia. At Petersburg we were treated fairly, being under the guard of old soldiers of an Alabama regiment, at Richmond we came under the authority of the notorious Home Guard. Our ration was a pint of beans four ounces of bread, and three ounces of meat a day. Another batch of prisoners joining us, we left Richmond sixteen hundred strong.

All blankets, haversacks, canteens, money, valuables of every kind, extra clothing, and in some cases the last shirt and drawers, had been previously taken from us.

At Lynchburg we were placed under the Home Guard, offered by Major and Captain Moffitt. The march to Danville was a weary and painful one of five days, under a torrid sun, many of us falling helplessly by the way, and soon filling the empty wagons of our train. On the first day we received a little meat, but the rest of our rations for the five days was thirteen crackers. During the six days by rail to Andersonville, meat was given us twice, and the daily ration was four crackers.

On entering the Stockade Prison, we found it crowded with twenty-eight hundred of our fellow-soldiers. By POWELL, I mean that it was difficult to move in any direction without jostling and being jostled. This prison is an open space, sloping on both sides, originally seventeen acres, now twenty-five acres, in the shape of a park-like ground, without trees or shelter of any kind. The soil is sand over a bottom of clay. The fence is made of upright trunks of trees, about twenty feet high, near the top of which are small platforms, where the guards are stationed. Twenty feet inside and parallel to the fence is a light railing, forming the "dead line," beyond which the projection of a foot or finger is sure to bring the deadly bullet of the sentinel.

Through the grounds, at nearly right-angles with the longer sides, runs or rather crosses a stream through an artificial channel, varying from five to six feet in width, the water about ankle deep, and near the middle of the inclosure, spreading out into a mass of about six acres filled with refuse wood, stumps, and debris of the camp. Before entering this inclosure the stream, or more properly sewer, passes through the camp of the guards, receiving from this source, and other farther up a large amount of the vilest material, even the contents of the sink. The water is of a dark color, and an ordinary glass would collect a thick sediment. This was our only drinking and cooking water. It was our custom to filter it as best we could through our remnants of haversacks, shirts and blouses. Wells had been dug, but the water either proved so productive of diarrhea, or so limited in quantity, that they were of no general use. The cook-house was situated on the stream just outside the stockade, and its refuse of decaying food was thrown into the water, a greasy coating covering much of the surface. To these was added the daily large amount of base matter from the camp itself. There was a system of policing, but the means were so limited, and so large a number of the men were rendered prostrate and depressed by imprisonment, that the work was very imperfectly done. One side of the swamp was naturally used as a sink, the men usually going out some distance into the water. Under the summer sun this place early became corruption too vile for description, the men breathing disgusting fumes, so that the surface of the water would be with a gentle breeze.

The new comers, on reaching this, would exclaim: "Is this hell? but they soon would become callous, and enter unhesitatingly the horrible rotting mass. The rebel authorities never removed any filth. There was seldom any visitation by the officers in charge. Two surgeons were at one time sent by President DAVIS to inspect the camp, but a walk through a small section gave them all the information they desired, and we never saw them again.

The guards usually numbered about sixty-four—eight at each end, and twenty-four on a side. On the outside, within three hundred yards, were fortifications on high ground, overlooking and perfectly commanding us, mounting twenty-four twelve-pound Napoleon Parrotts. We were never permitted to go outside, except at times, in small squads, to gather our fire-wood. During the building of the cook-house, a few, who were carpenters, were ordered out to assist.

Our only shelter from the sun, rain and night cold, was what we could make by stretching over our coats or covers of blankets, which a few had, but generally there was no attempt by day or night to protect ourselves.

The rations consisted of eight ounces of corn bread, (the cob being ground with the kernel), and generally some two ounces of condemned pork, offensive in appearance and smell. Occasionally, about twice a week, two table-spoonfuls of rice, and in place of the pork the same amount (two table-spoonfuls) of molasses was given us about twice a month. This ration was brought into camp about four o'clock, p. m., and thrown from the wagons to the ground, the men being arranged in divisions of two hundred and seventy, subdivided into squads of ninety and thirty. It was the custom to consume the whole ration at once, rather than save any for the next day. The distribution being often unequal, some would lose the ration altogether. We were allowed no dish or cooking utensil of any kind. On opening the camp in winter, the first two thousand prisoners were allowed skillets, one to fifty men, but these were soon taken away. To the best of my knowledge, information and belief, our ration was in quality a starving one, it being often too foul to be touched or too raw to be digested.

The cook-house went into operation about May 10, 1864. Our regular army ration is: 1 lb. Pork, or 1 lb. Fresh Beef, 10 oz. Hard Bread, or 20 oz. Soft Bread, or Flour, 1 1/2 lb. Coffee, 1 1/2 lb. Sugar, 1 1/2 lb. Rice, or 1 lb. Beans, Ham, or Vegetables—Fresh or Salted, Molasses, Vinegar, &c., irregularly.

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## PRISON AT ANDERSONVILLE, GEORGIA.

